



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 650074

DfES Number: 519825

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	15/12/2003
Inspector Name	Nicola Mary Eileen Matthews

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Homesteaders Day Nursery
Setting Address	The Homestead, Sudbury Road Gestingthorpe Halstead Essex CO9 3BL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Susan Aitken
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ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Homesteaders Nursery has been open for 15 years. It operates from an annexe of the house belonging to the registered provider, in Gestingthorpe. The premises consists of two rooms, kitchen, toilet and cloakroom. There is a large, enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 31 children on roll. This includes 11 funded 3-year-olds and 6 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend a variety of days each week. The group has supported children with special needs in the past.

The group opens 5 days a week for 50 weeks of the year. Opening times are 08:00 to 18:00.

Four staff work with the children, two of whom are full-time. Three staff members have NVQ Level 3 or equivalent. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the Kid's Club Network.

How good is the Day Care?

Homesteaders Day Nursery is providing satisfactory care for children. The premises are warm and welcoming and flexibility of the routine and the physical environment ensures children's individual care needs are met. The rural location of the setting enables children to observe domestic and wild animals in natural surroundings. A good range of play resources are available, in cupboards and boxes around the perimeter of the room. Most documentation is in place.

The indoors is safe and secure, however some safety and security aspects of the outdoors are not always maintained. Children are encouraged to practice good hygiene procedures. They have flexibility as to when they can eat lunch, which ensures children eat when they are hungry. There are no children attending currently who have special educational needs. The welfare of the children is paramount.

Children have access to a variety of activities indoors and outdoors. The children

have daily access to the outdoors, weather permitting. The staff use praise and encouragement effectively to ensure children know the agreed codes for the setting. Children's behaviour is very good, they show respect for each other and the environment.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are welcomed into the group when they bring their child and come to collect. There is a lot of available information displayed in the entrance area about issues relating to child care. Staff relay information 'daily' about the children to the parents on an informal basis.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the registered provider agreed to develop policies on administration of medication, sick children, no smoking, equal opportunities to be shared with parents, behaviour management, complaints procedure and child protection. Also agreed was to maintain a record of visitors, keep a record of significant incidents and ensure the premises were secure. All the policies and procedures requested have been implemented. There is now a record of visitors and the security of the building has been improved, which ensures a safer environment for the children.

What is being done well?

- Children's dietary needs are met well ensuring they do not go hungry after having an early breakfast.
- The rural location and size of the setting provides a homely and unhurried atmosphere where children can develop in a relaxed friendly environment.
- The children's behaviour is very good, they respect each other and the environment and are developing social competence. The staff are good role models for the children and use praise and encouragement to ensure children know the agreed codes of the nursery.
- The good security of the building ensures children cannot leave them unattended and nobody unauthorised can enter.

What needs to be improved?

- the operational plan needs to be developed and shared with the parents
- the security of the outdoors with reference to the field gate.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
2	Develop an operational plan, which is made available to parents.
6	Make sure that premises are secure and that children are unable to leave them unsupervised.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Homesteaders Day Nursery is good. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. The staff have built up good trusting relationships with the children. Staff work directly with the children supporting them in their choice of activities. They use open ended questions to encourage the children to think about the answer, however they do not sufficiently promote language to enable children to predict and problem solve. There are plentiful resources available to support the children's learning. Staff are good role models and use praise and encouragement to promote children's good behaviour. At present there are no children currently attending who have special educational needs. The setting only has an informal policy to support special needs at present.

The long term planning covers the six areas of learning. However, the short term plans do not specify the learning intentions and adult role. The assessment system identifies the child's next step by grading how well the child can perform. The child's next step, is memorised well by the staff so they can implement strategies to help the child to progress.

The leadership and management is generally good. The owner who works in the setting encourages staff to attend training and she shows interest in their pastoral care.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Information is passed on regularly in the form of newsletters. They have access to the planning, which is displayed on the wall and can see what their children have done through colourful photograph displays and art work. Parents do not regularly access and contribute to their children's developmental records.

What is being done well?

- The children's social behaviour is being fostered by staff acting as good role models and encouraging children to be polite and to consider others.
- The children are becoming confident communicators using talk to negotiate support from the staff and other children. They speak confidently to unfamiliar adults and initiate conversations amongst themselves maintaining a theme.
- Children have good observational skills, which are promoted by the local environment where they can explore the fauna and flora on a planned and spontaneous basis.
- Children have good self control over their bodies. They show a good sense of spatial awareness making sure playmates have their own personal space. They handle tools safely and use them effectively to make change for

example by cutting and rolling.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunity for children to predict and to problem solve, to develop simple calculation skills, compare length and weight, to record observations using simple mathematical solutions, to use music and movement to respond to feelings and ideas and to observe the effect activity has on the body
- the planning so children experience a broad based curriculum in line with the Foundation Stage, where learning intentions and the adult role are included
- the assessments to be informed by direct observations on a regular basis and shared with the parents
- procedures to support children with special needs.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The progress made since the last inspection is limited. The provider agreed to relate the assessment records to the six areas of learning, to include learning intentions in the planning, strengthen the partnership with parents and share the assessment records regularly with them and implement a special educational needs policy. The assessment records are now related to the six areas of learning. The planning does relate to some learning intentions but this is limited. The parents were informed that they could access the assessment records when they wished via a newsletter put in the children's lunch boxes, however this was not successful and no other strategies have been employed to work towards the key issue. No special educational needs policy has been developed.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are developing good relationships with each other and the adults. Children look to the adults for support when needed and are able to take turns and share fairly. They are learning to say please and thank you spontaneously. Children are given good opportunities to independently choose activities and move freely between activities and contribute to their own experiences.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children speak clearly for a variety of purposes for example recall significant events in their own lives. However they have few opportunities to start to predict and problem solve using language. They handle books appropriately and enjoy having stories read to them. The more able child recalls the story well. Children can write their name confidently and form the letters correctly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children can count reliably up to 10 and beyond. They use number in their play, for example counting out the pieces of play dough. Children make patterns cutting paper, colouring in insect body segments, painting, drawing and copying some famous designers for example William Morris. Children know the simple shapes, however, children have few opportunities to develop some simple mathematical concepts, for example, early calculation skills.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children competently use the computer following a simple programme. They manipulate the mouse very well. Children are developing a good sense of place by visiting the local farm and talking to the local policeman and postman. They use their senses to explore natural and man made materials. Children effectively observe the mini beast population in the garden and record their findings using art and craft. Children have few opportunities to experience other cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children use play dough imaginatively, pushing, poking, rolling and stroking it to manipulate into a shape to represent objects of food. They experience regularly a wide range of large and small equipment to support their co-ordination. Children have few opportunities to use movement to respond to feelings, ideas, experiences and observe the effect activity has on the body. Children use scissors and other tools effectively and safely.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children explore colour using paint, crayons and natural materials. Children use paint and felt tips creatively to represent their ideas, for example members of their family. They have built up an extensive repertoire of songs and rhymes, and explore sound using percussion type instruments, however children have few opportunities to use music and movement creatively.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- develop and implement a broad based curriculum in line with the Foundation Stage and linked to the stepping stones where the adult role and learning intentions are clear and shared with all staff
- develop the assessment system so that the records are informed by direct observation and shared with the parents
- develop procedures to support children with special needs.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.